THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) to (c) Increase in frequency of Chennai Rajdhani Express from bi-weekly to six days a week is neither feasible due to operational and resource constraints nor is commercially viable as the train is not fully patronised. Speeding up of trains including Chennai Rajdhani is an on-going process. With effect from 15.8.1998 Chennai Rajdhani Express has been speeded up by one hour. Further, speeding up of Chennai Rajdhani is not feasible at present.

Project for a new rail line in Himachal Pradesh

2314. SHRIMATI CHANDRESH KUMARI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether some project for new rail line from Bhanupalli on the Sirhind-Ropar-Nangal Dam line upto Rampur via Bilaspur in Himachal Pradesh has been approved by the Ministry, on the Konkan Railway Corporation pattern;

(b) if so, total cost of project, progress made as on 15th November, 1998, with estimated amount spent so far;

(c) target fixed to complete the project;

(d) by when the project is likely to be completed;

(e) whether the Ministry propose to launch similar projects in Himachal Pradesh to explore new passenger and freight revenues sources; and

(e) if so, the details thereof; if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) No, Sir. However, the construction of a new rail line from Bhanupalli-Bilaspur-Beri is proposed to be taken up through Satlj Valley Railway Corporation which is being set up as a Joint Venture by Himachal Pradesh Govt. with participation by the Cement Manufacturers and IRCON (Indian Railway Construction Company) on behalf of the Railway. The date of taking up the project is not yet known to this Ministry since the Joint Venture is being co-ordinated by the Govt. of Himachal Pradesh.

(b) The anticipated cost of the project is Rs. 400 crs. as per the survey report of 1996 and would now be about Rs. 500 crores at current day prices.

(c) and (d) No target date has been fixed.

(e) and (f) There is no proposal for launching any similar projects at present due to resource constraints.

Problems of 60 Days Advance Reservation

2315. SHRI S.M. KRISHNA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the problems of reservation have increased after the decision of giving reservation facilities for 60 days advance period as the tickets are not available on very first day of reservation; and

(b) whether it is a fact that the agents are blocking and blacking the tickets; if so, the steps taken to improve the reservation system?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) No such complaint has been received.

(b) Some incidents have come to notice. Regular and surprise checks are conducted by the Commercial & Vigilance Departments with the assistance of Railway Protection Force and Government Railway Police personnel to check the activities of touts and other anti-social elements in and around the reservation offices.

देहरादून को ऋषिकेश से रेल लाइन से जोड़ने के लिये सर्वेक्षण

2316. **श्री मनोहर कान्त ध्यानी:** क्या रेल मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या सरकार ने देहरादून को ऋषिकेश से सीधे रेल लाइन से जोड़ने हेतु एक सर्वेक्षण करवाया था;

(ख) क्या यह सच है कि यह दूरी वर्तमान दूरी से आधी अर्थात् 30 किलोमीटर पड़ रही है;

(ग) क्या वर्ष 1997 की प्रथम छमाही तक सर्वेक्षण कार्य 50 प्रतिशत पूरा हो चुका था;

(घ) क्या वर्तमान में फील्ड कार्य पूरा हो चुका है; यदि नहीं, तो इसके क्या कारण हैं; और

(ङ) इस योजना की कब तक स्वीकृति प्राप्त होने की संभावना है?

रेल मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री, संसदीय कार्य मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री तथा योजना और कार्यक्रम क्रार्यान्वयन मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री राम नाईक): (क) जी नहीं, लेकिन देहरादून से ऋषिकेश तक नई लाइन के सर्वेक्षण का काम हाथ में लिया गया है और इस समय प्रगति पर है;

(ख) देहरादून और ऋषिकेश के बीच की दूरी 52 कि०मी० है, जबकि सर्वेक्षणाधीन सीधे संपर्क के अनुसार यह दूरी 40 कि०मी० है।

(ग) जी नहीं, बहरहाल जून, 1997 तक लगभग 40% जमीनी काम पूरा हो चुका था।

(घ) जी हां, सर्वेक्षण रपट इकट्ठी की जा रही है।

(ङ) सर्वेक्षण रपट उपलब्ध हो जाने के बाद ही इस परियोजना पर आगे विचार करना संभव हो सकेगा।

Direct Train between Tirupati and Shirdi

2317. DR. MOHAN BABU : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of tremendous traffic potential between Tirupati in Andhra Pradesh and Shirdi in Maharastra;

(b) if so, whether a proposal to introduce a direct train between Tirupati and Shirdi is being considered by Government; and

(c) if so, what action Government propose to take for lakhs of rail passengers travelling between these two leading pilgrim centres in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAY'S MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) to (c) The traffic potential between Tirupati and Shirdi has been assessed and found inadequate to justify introduction of a train.

Retired Sr. Loco Inspectors of Northen Railways Jhansi

2318. SHRIMATI MALTI SHARMA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of Sr. Loco Inspectors who retired on 31st October, 1994 from Northern Railway, Jhansi;

(b) whether it is a fact that the Railway authorities have not refunded the future debit amount of these persons since then: